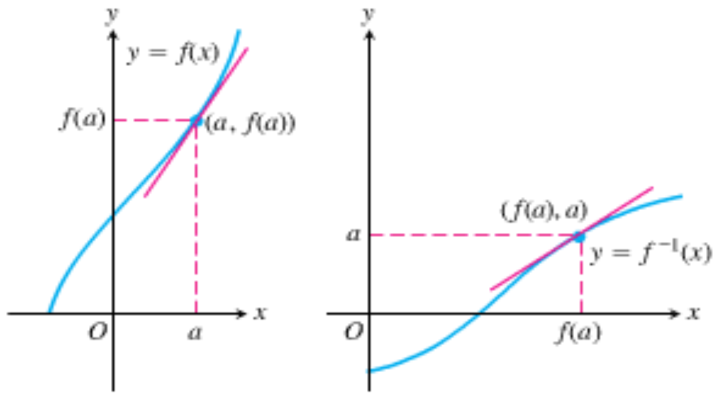
Derivatives of Inverse Functions



The slopes are reciprocal: $\left.\frac{df^{-1}}{dx}\right|_{f(a)} = \frac{1}{\left.\frac{df}{dx}\right|_{a}}$

Figure 3.52 The graphs of a function and its inverse. Notice that the tangent lines have reciprocal slopes.

THEOREM 3 Derivatives of Inverse Functions

If f is differentiable at every point of an interval I and df/dx is never zero on I, then f has an inverse and f^{-1} is differentiable at every point of the interval $f(I)$.

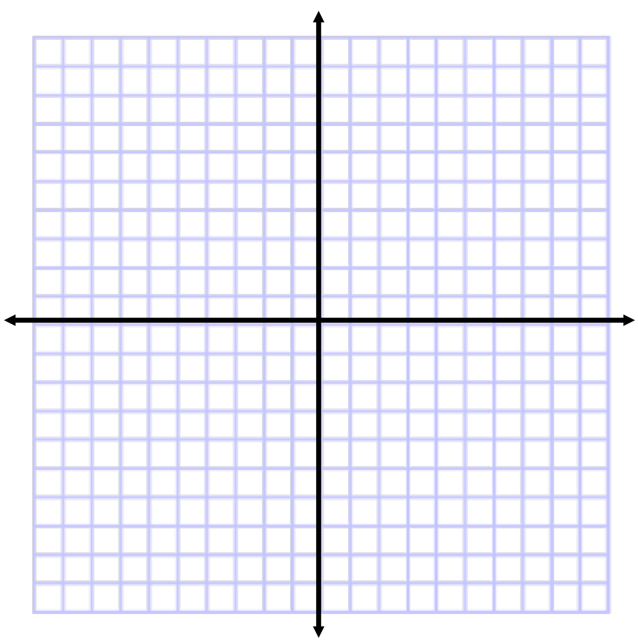
EXPLORATION 1 **Finding a Derivative on an Inverse Graph Geometrically**

Let $f(x) = x^5 + 2x - 1$. Since the point (1, 2) is on the graph of f, it follows that the point (2, 1) is on the graph of f^{-1}. Can you find

$$\frac{df^{-1}}{dx}(2),$$

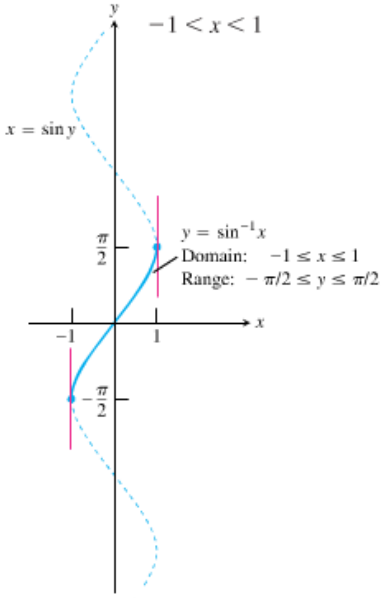
the value of df^{-1}/dx at 2, without knowing a formula for f^{-1}?

1. Graph $f(x) = x^5 + 2x - 1$. A function must be one-to-one to have an inverse function. Is this function one-to-one?
2. Find $f'(x)$. How could this derivative help you to conclude that f has an inverse?
3. Reflect the graph of f across the line $y = x$ to obtain a graph of f^{-1}.
4. Sketch the tangent line to the graph of f^{-1} at the point (2, 1). Call it L.
5. Reflect the line L across the line $y = x$. At what point is the reflection of L tangent to the graph of f?
6. What is the slope of the reflection of L?
7. What is the slope of L?
8. What is $\dfrac{df^{-1}}{dx}(2)$?



Derivative of the Arcsine

$$y = \sin^{-1} x$$



$$\frac{dy}{dx} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1 - x^2}}$$

Inverse Trig Function Derivatives Activity

$$\frac{d}{dx}(\sin^{-1} x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1 - x^2}}.$$

If u is a differentiable function of x with $|u| < 1$, we apply the Chain Rule to get

$$\frac{d}{dx}\sin^{-1} u = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1 - u^2}}\frac{du}{dx}, \qquad |u| < 1.$$

EXAMPLE 1 Applying the Formula

$$\frac{d}{dx}(\sin^{-1} x^2)$$

$$\frac{d}{dx} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-(x^2)^2}} \cdot 2x$$

$$= \frac{2x}{\sqrt{1-x^4}}$$

$$\frac{d}{dx}\tan^{-1}x = \frac{1}{1+x^2}$$

EXAMPLE 2 A Moving Particle

position function

A particle moves along the x-axis so that its position at any time $t \geq 0$ is $x(t) = \tan^{-1}\sqrt{t}$. What is the velocity of the particle when $t = 16$?

$$v(t) = \frac{d}{dt}x(t)$$

$$v(t) = \frac{1}{1+(\sqrt{t})^2} \cdot \frac{1}{2}t^{-1/2}$$

$$= \frac{1}{1+t} \cdot \frac{1}{2\sqrt{t}}$$

$$= \frac{1}{2\sqrt{t}(1+t)}$$

$$v(16) = \frac{1}{136}$$

$$\frac{d}{dx}\sec^{-1}x = \frac{1}{|x|\sqrt{x^2-1}}$$

EXAMPLE 3 Using the Form

$$\frac{d}{dx}\sec^{-1}(5x^4) =$$

$$\frac{d}{dx} = \frac{1}{|5x^4|\sqrt{(5x^4)^2-1}} \cdot 20x^3$$

$$= \frac{20x^3}{5x^4\sqrt{25x^8-1}}$$

$$= \frac{4}{x\sqrt{25x^8-1}}$$

Inverse Function–Inverse Cofunction Identities

$$\cos^{-1} x = \pi/2 - \sin^{-1} x$$

$$\cot^{-1} x = \pi/2 - \tan^{-1} x$$

$$\csc^{-1} x = \pi/2 - \sec^{-1} x$$

Use these identities to come up with the derivatives of these 3 inverse functions.

$$\frac{d}{dx}\cos^{-1}x = 0 - \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-x^2}}$$

$$= \frac{-1}{\sqrt{1-x^2}}$$

Calculator Conversion Identities

$$\sec^{-1} x = \cos^{-1}(1/x)$$

$$\cot^{-1} x = \pi/2 - \tan^{-1} x$$

$$\csc^{-1} x = \sin^{-1}(1/x)$$

Notice that we do not use $\tan^{-1}(1/x)$ as an identity for $\cot^{-1} x$. A glance at the graphs of $y = \tan^{-1}(1/x)$ and $y = \pi/2 - \tan^{-1} x$ reveals the problem (Figure 3.55).

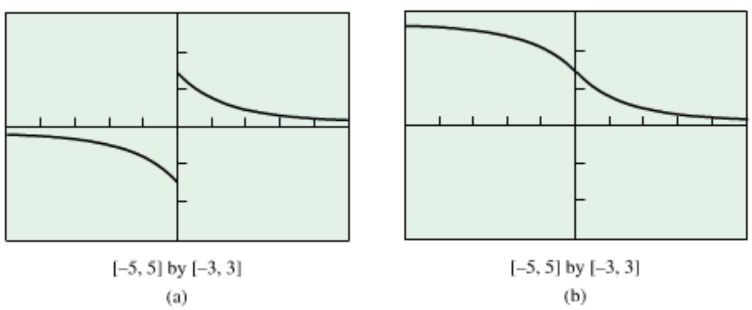


Figure 3.55 The graphs of (a) $y = \tan^{-1}(1/x)$ and (b) $y = \pi/2 - \tan^{-1} x$. The graph in (b) is the same as the graph of $y = \cot^{-1} x$.

EXAMPLE 4 A Tangent Line to the Arccotangent Curve

Find an equation for the line tangent to the graph of $y = \cot^{-1} x$ at $x = -1$.

$$\cot^{-1}(-1) = \frac{\pi}{2} - \tan^{-1}(-1)$$

$$= \frac{\pi}{2} - \left(-\frac{\pi}{4}\right) = \frac{3\pi}{4}$$

point: $\left(-1, \frac{3\pi}{4}\right)$

$$y' = \frac{-1}{1+x^2}$$

$$y'(-1) = \frac{-1}{1+(-1)^2} = \; = \frac{-1}{2}$$

$$\boxed{y - \frac{3\pi}{4} = -\frac{1}{2}(x+1)}$$